



# The Corps Engages:

## Alaska Earthquake of 1964

**T**HIRTY-NINE years ago this month, a violent earthquake rocked 50,000 square miles of south-central Alaska, causing more than \$500 million in property damage. The temblor released twice as much energy as the quake that destroyed San Francisco in 1906.

The Corps of Engineers, in association with the Office of Emergency Planning, moved quickly to help communities in distress. Though many of their own homes were in ruins, the Corps' Alaska District employees reported for duty immediately.

Their first priority was reopening highways and re-establishing essential water and fuel supplies. Racing against the calendar, the Corps managed to complete most of the repairs before the Alaskan winter arrived. Additionally, they channeled most of the restoration work to hard-hit local businesses, providing employment to residents whose livelihood was disrupted.

The Corps spent more than \$110 million on salvage, rescue and rehabilitation operations in Alaska.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Office of History.  
Photographs courtesy the U.S. Geological Survey and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

**The quake also caused the collapse of a section of Anchorage's Fourth Avenue.**



**An earthquake-generated tsunami battered the waterfront at Kodiak.**



**Government Hill elementary school was ripped in half when the earth beneath it shifted.**

